REMARKS

STATUS OF THE CLAIMS

In accordance with the foregoing, claims 1, 10 and 19 have been amended. Claims 1-2, 4-6, 8-11, 13-15, 17-20, 22-25 and 26-27 are pending and under consideration.

No new matter is being presented, and approval of the amended claims is respectfully requested.

REJECTIONS OF CLAIMS 1, 2, 4-6, 8-11, 13-15, 17-20, 22-24 AND 26-27 FOR OBVIOUSNESS UNDER 35 U.S.C. §103(a) AS BEING UNPATENTABLE OVER RAGHUNANDAN (U.S. PATENT NO. 6,721,785) IN VIEW OF BREZIN ET AL. (U.S. PATENT NO. 7,039,639) AND IN VIEW OF HAYNES (U.S. PATENT NO. 6,574,671)

The rejections of the pending claims are respectfully traversed and reconsideration is requested.

Regarding the newly-added features of independent claims 1, 10 and 19, the Examiner notes, on page 3 of the Action, that Raghunandan discusses creating a group based on recipients that are frequently contacted. The Examiner further states that to determine which recipients are frequently contacted, there must be an element of counting. In support, the Examiner cites Brezin et al. (hereinafter "Brezin") as teaching simple frequency counts of communication events (citing Brezin, column 3, lines 50-65).

Brezin discloses a method for tracking interactions and relationships with users, and defining appropriate relationship groups. (Brezin, Abstract). A relationship group representing the most important correspondents for a given user is constructed and maintained. Computations that are used to construct the group include a simple frequency count of communication events. (See Brezin, column 3, lines 50-61).

In contrast, according to embodiments of the present invention, as recited in independent claims 1, 10 and 19, an input count of the mail destination addresses is set in the history in order to register the added group name when the input count reaches a predetermined number. (See, for example, page 12, lines 12-25, of the present specification). That is, the user may change and set the predetermined count, and a group name is registered, automatically, when the input count reaches the predetermined number. (See also, Fig. 7 of the present application).

Therefore, independent claims 1, 10 and 19 are amended herein to clarify that a setting module setting an input count of the mail destination addresses in the history in order to register the added group name *when the input count reaches a predetermined number.*

Furthermore, Haynes teaches allowing a sender to assign different levels of importance

based on the type of recipient filed. That is, the sender can indicate, for example, that every recipient in the "cc" list should be marked "Normal", and every recipient in the "bcc" list should be marked "FYI". (See Column 5, lines 30-36).

Therefore, according to Haynes, a particular group represents a particular characteristic, and placing a recipient's email address in that group results in the characteristic being automatically applied to the email address. (See Column 5, lines 38-42).

In contrast, embodiments of the present invention are characterized by generating a group formed of the plurality of multicast target mail destination addresses, *said group capable of including destination addresses of various destination attributes*, corresponding to the detection.

Therefore, independent claims 1, 10 and 19 are amended herein to further clarify that the groups formed of the plurality of multicast target mail destinations are capable of including addresses of different destination attributes.

Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that independent claims 1, 10 and 19 patentably distinguish over the prior art.

The pending dependent claims inherit the patentability of their respective base claim and, thus, it is respectfully submitted that the dependent claims also patentably distinguish over the prior art.

CONCLUSION

In accordance with the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that all outstanding objections and rejections have been overcome and/or rendered moot. Further, all pending claims patentably distinguish over the prior art. There being no further outstanding objections or rejections, it is submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. An early action to that effect is courteously solicited.

Finally, if there are any formal matters remaining after this response, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned to attend to these matters.

If there are any additional fees associated with filing of this Amendment, please charge the same to our Deposit Account No. 19-3935.

Respectfully submitted,

STAAS & HALSEY LLP

Date: _February 7, 2007_   By: _Michael P. Staley_

Michael P. Stanley
Registration No. 58,523

1201 New York Avenue, N.W., 7th Floor
Washington, D.C. 20005
Telephone: (202) 434-1500
Facsimile: (202) 434-1501

9